THE REBOOT REGIMEN

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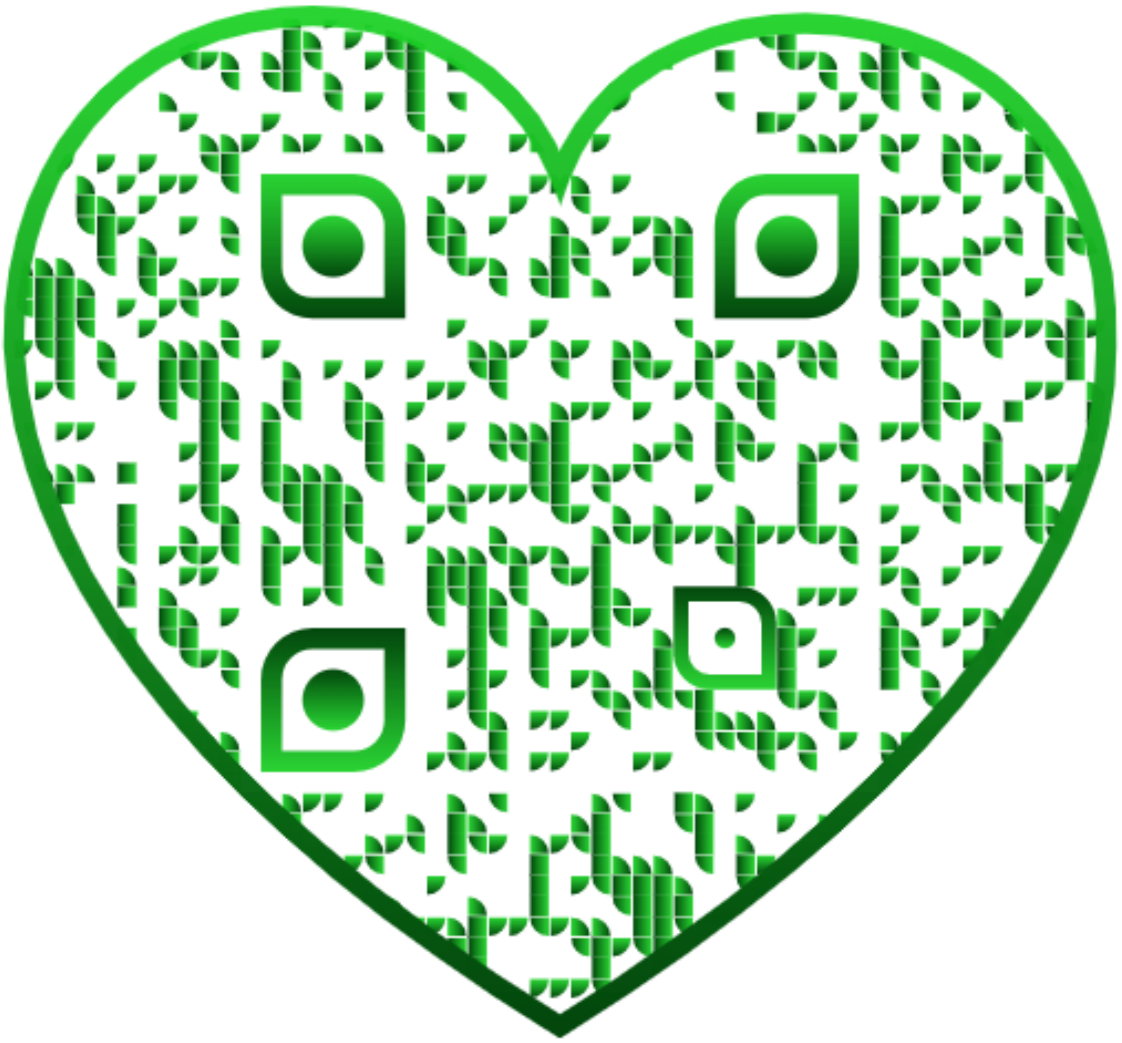

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Part I: Leaving Fantasy for Reality

Welcome to *The Reboot Regimen*. In this guide I'll help you figure out what actions you need to take to make your porn use a thing of the past. Porn is often used as a dysfunctional method of trying to meet your needs. Because of this, we'll primarily be focusing on building the foundational habits and lifestyle shifts that will allow you to fill the gap left by porn in a healthier and more fulfilling way.

In *Part I: Leaving Fantasy for Reality* of this guide, we'll start off by looking at the underlying nature of porn addiction as an act of escapism and how authentic engagement with life is the key to breaking free.

In *Part II: The Regimens* we'll look at the dysfunctional "benefits" that porn offers you, and then construct healthy replacement activities so that you can get your core needs and desires met in a better way.

In *Part III: Beyond the Regimens* we'll examine how to take your process deeper and further.

This guide is designed to be a central part of the Universal Man project. This project is dedicated to helping you turn your flight into fight so you can master yourself, conquer your goals, and live on the front lines of your life. I want to help you sharpen your masculine edge so that you can cut through the resistance holding you back from being a man that you admire.

Not only have I personally gone from living as a highly dysfunctional porn addict to a successfully self-employed and happily married man, but I've also helped hundreds of individual coaching clients, and thousands through my online programs and YouTube videos, achieve similar transformations.

I'm confident that if you apply the principles contained within this guide then you will make great strides in your own journey. Beyond just dramatically improving your capability to cut porn out of your life, you will also seriously improve your life in general. Let's get to it!

Using porn is about escapism

Porn is a portal that you can use to instantly transport a part of your mind to a virtual world where you can fulfill your most indulgent fantasies. This act lets you escape your actual reality which is often filled with hardship, pain, and challenge.

The problem is that as you become more and more acclimated to relying on escape into this fantasy world to cope with your life, the less you seek improvement and growth IN your life, which in turn just makes you want to escape more.

Porn and sexual escapism

For most guys, porn use starts out as simple sexual curiosity. As a man you have natural sexual attractions and desires and at first glance porn seems to offer a convenient way to scratch that primal itch.

In other words, porn initially starts out as a method of sexual escapism. In a world where you do not masturbate to porn (known as the act of “PMO” which is an acronym for "**P**orn, **M**asturbation, **O**rgasm"), one of the major burdens of masculinity is learning how to carry and integrate your sex drive in an authentic and moral manner. PMO seems to offer a way to escape that burden.

In a world without PMO a man needs develop his character and status so that he can attract a mate to share his sexuality with. That's challenging work. Even if he accomplishes this, he then needs to develop his willpower, fortitude and morals to be able to withstand inevitable lack of sexual satisfaction.

Even if you marry the love of your life, you may still face times of abstinence and sexual longing. Heck, even if you do the work to live like a playboy and sleep with hundreds of women you still aren’t going to be sexually satisfied always for the rest of your life. At some point you’ll still need to learn how to deal with your sex drive.

However, *with* PMO you can skip all that hard work. With just the press of a few buttons, porn allows you to be instantly transported to your own private harem of beautiful women willing to engage in every sex act possibly imaginable. Basically, porn lets you escape the challenge of facing and managing your sexual desire.

Porn as a mood modifier

While porn use might start as sexual escapism, it rarely stops there. Turns out the combo of porn and masturbation is so powerful for men that it can pretty much transform ANY negative state into one of temporary bliss.

Whenever you are angry, sad, stressed, bored, lonely, or feeling inadequate, you can pop on some porn and you are (temporarily) filled with excitement and pleasure. This instantaneous and temporary relief is enticing enough for most men to make it a daily (or multiple times a day) ritual.

Because of the power this pleasure button holds, I believe PMO has become the adult male security blanket. Whenever things get tough, the modern man tends to clutch his penis and porn to hide from his current challenges.

Turns out however, that this is not actually a good strategy for living a fulfilling and meaningful life. In fact, it's pretty much a recipe for disaster.

Porn and inflated sex drive

The first issue with heavily engaging in PMO is that it creates a massively inflated sex drive. Don't get me wrong, men naturally tend to have high sex drives. But I believe porn takes that drive and magnifies it in a seriously unhelpful manner.

The more sexual stimulation you acclimate your body to, the more that it wants. This is basic reward-based conditioning: use porn, get rewarded with intense dopamine rush plus orgasm. In other words, your brain's like, "Well, that was fun and seemed to make me feel way better than where I was, let's do that more often!"

I believe this issue is compounded further if you end up using porn as a solution to non-sexual issues like stress or other negative emotions. Through compulsively reaching for porn whenever things get difficult in your life, you are teaching your brain that porn is the answer.

So instead of feeling stressed, angry, sad, lonely, bored, whatever, you just feel a craving for PMO because this is what you've trained your brain to see as your "medicine."

When you are unaware of this, you can feel like you have this crazy high and impossible to manage sex drive. However, in reality you just have deeper life issues that you've become conditioned to repressing through PMO.

Porn and escalation

The porn trap doesn't stop with an inflated sex drive. Compulsive PMO doesn't just lead to a desire for MORE sexual stimulation, but also a desire for more INTENSE sexual stimulation.

Basically, when you constantly expose yourself to a certain kind of sexual stimulation, you become desensitized to it. This causes you to try and reach for a more intense sexual stimulus. In many cases this can lead to escalated and exaggerated fetishes.

So for example, for one guy porn might create an artificially inflated breast fetish. I think most men naturally appreciate and are attracted to breasts. However, after seeing and jerking off to thousands of breasts, a man's brain naturally creates a hierarchy of the "best" breasts and then he needs to see breasts of a certain size or shape in order to even be interested.

This desensitization and escalation can apply to other body parts or sex acts as well. Where before, looking at a female underwear catalogue might be enough to stimulate a man, he now needs multiple tabs open of specific kinds of niche hardcore pornography to get turned on.

This process of morphing sexual tastes combined with inflated sex drive can lead to a troubling situation where he thinks that he absolutely NEEDS porn. Most guys rationally understand that they aren't going to be able to replicate the frequency and character of their porn escapades in the real world. If they don't know that their sexuality can be rebooted and brought down to normal levels, they can feel trapped by their sexual desires which have spiraled out of control.

To make matters worse still, this kind of escalation is often accompanied by sexual dysfunction such as porn induced erectile dysfunction (where you can only get hard to porn) or porn induced delayed ejaculation (where you can't get off without porn).

Basically, if you use enough porn, your brain begins thinking that sex is an activity that involves an electronic screen and some hand lotion and fails to respond properly to a real human sexual experience. This kind of situation just deepens the dependence upon porn.

The Spiral of Escapism

The end result I've repeatedly seen at the root of chronic porn use is what I refer to as the "spiral of escapism." The way it works is this:

You experience some kind of discomfort, and instead of confronting and addressing the issue causing the discomfort you use porn to run away from it. As you run away from that problem, the problem gets worse. Since the problem gets worse, it just makes you want to escape more. This causes you to watch more porn and leave your problems to fester and become even worse. If you let this cycle continue it will just bury you deeper and deeper into a hole.

The result of engaging in this spiral of escapism is that you end up becoming someone whose main objective is to run from life rather than to actually live it.

For example, if you run from mastering your sex drive through use of PMO, your sex drive will just intensify and escalate in taste. This makes dealing with your sex drive even harder than it initially was, which will just make you want to reach for PMO more and more; which in turn just stokes your sexual hunger and craving further.

In a non-sexual example, let's say you use porn to cope with loneliness. If you use porn to run from that loneliness instead of getting out there and connecting with people, then not only does that core issue go unaddressed and get worse, but you also make things more difficult to eventually get back out there.

The longer you go without connecting, the more previous relationships deteriorate and the more uncomfortable making new relationships becomes. If you allow this pattern to progress, the path of porn seems easier and easier, but real connection seems harder and harder.

As you can see, it's very easy to find yourself deep in a hole feeling quite trapped.

Quitting Porn is about Engagement

If using porn is about escapism, then quitting porn is about engagement. Instead of running away from the hard parts of life to go hide in a sexual fantasy world, you need to confront and overcome those hard parts of reality to make your reality BETTER.

The ultimate cure for the escapism of porn is to live a life you don't want to escape from. You might be thinking, "Psh easier said than done!" and you're right. Connecting and working with reality is a challenging thing. In fact, it is THE challenge of life.

Until you learn how to engage more fully and healthily with the reality of your experiences, your only other option is to keep running and hope that the monsters you are trying to escape won't eventually swallow you whole (spoiler: they will).

My goal with this guide is to help make this process of transitioning from making love to your hand to making love to life more clear, doable, and efficient.

Reboot

The first thing you need to understand is that if you cut the porn and masturbation out, your sexuality will return to more natural and manageable levels.

This process of recovery is popularly known online as "reboot" which is simply a name for the journey of cutting out porn. The idea is that you can reset your sexuality to a healthier and more natural level by temporarily "unplugging it," kind of like how you might reboot a computer if it's acting up.

Based up on my personal rebooting experience combined with helping hundreds of other men with their reboots, I can confidently say that the best method of reboot is known as a "hard mode" reboot, which is just a synonym for a temporary period of complete abstinence. In other words, no porn, no masturbation, no sex for a period of at least 90 days (or longer depending on how bad your symptoms are).

For a more in-depth explanation of why hard mode is the best mode or how to navigate your reboot in a relationship you'll have to check out my other material. But to summarize it, any other sexual activity before your brain has rebooted will likely serve as a gateway back into porn.

If you really want to be master of your sex drive, you must learn that you can survive and thrive without getting every sexual desire met. Without this experience, you will always be a slave to your sexual urges because you will think you "need" to satisfy them.

Moving forward in this guide it's assumed that you want the best reboot possible and will be engaging in a hard mode reboot.

Comfort with discomfort

To overcome the uncomfortable adaptation period of rebooting, you need to develop your discipline and willpower. At its core, this is a mindset. It's the ability to keep your eye on long term, big picture payoff rather than short term pleasure.

PMO follows the formula of pleasure first, pain later. This is the lifestyle of immediate gratification. Discipline follows the pattern of pain first, pleasure later. This is a lifestyle of fulfillment and satisfaction. To transition out of the former and into the latter, you must get comfortable with discomfort.

There is a finite, defined number of cravings and urges you need to overcome to rewire your brain from porn. I don't know that exact number - it could be hundreds, it could be thousands. The thing is, it's a finite and limited number.

You can think of this number as a big pot of pain soup that you need to eat to regain your taste for the authentic goodness of life. Excess pleasure is what desensitized you and got you addicted. This pain soup of discomfort by discipline will RE-sensitize you and set you free. It is your medicine.

Every time a spoonful of that soup comes around, you either need to swallow it and come one step closer to freedom or reject it and give into the easy path. It's worth mentioning that every spoonful you reject goes back into the pot with a little extra added “interest.”

Porn addiction is a pleasure debt. Every time you swipe that credit card of immediate satisfaction, you build that debt. This debt collects interest and grows the longer you take to show up and start paying it off. You can think of the regimens we cover later as your payment plan.

Filling your engagement toolbox

You cannot just quit porn and change nothing else in your life. You need to outright replace it. Porn may be a dysfunctional tool for self-management, but if you want to stop using it you need to consciously use some OTHER tool to do the job of self-management better.

The issue is that there is no other individual thing that could provide the level of mental control that porn offers other than hard drugs. Porn and hard drugs are pretty much the only "unconditional instant feel good buttons" that exist.

So instead of trying to find a one-to-one replacement for porn, you need to think of it as replacing the single poisonous "super tool" of porn for a TOOLBOX of authentic and healthy tools.

But beyond just understanding these new tools, you need to develop your skill in wielding them. Porn is pretty idiot proof - look at something you find sexy and rub your junk. Real self-management tools require a bit more effort and ability than that.

The takeaway here is to understand that your reboot is an initially uphill climb. You stop relying on your PMO crutch, you'll feel crippled until you can build up your strength and ability with your new tools. By mentally preparing for and accepting this reality, you will be in a much better place to experience success.

Dignity

To begin paying off this pleasure debt by building your tools and skills, you need a clear plan. You need a set of specific actions that will replace the crutch of porn and allow you to plug back authentically into your life.

It is only by developing a holistic and robust approach for interacting with life that you can discard porn. Basically, it's about finding a new way of living that renders the masturbatory PMO lifestyle obsolete.

You must become a man that you admire who is living a life you give a crap about. This is the only way to live a life that you don't want to escape from.

This process then fundamentally starts with dignity. **You need to decide that you are worth this effort and worthy of this reward. You need to be willing to value yourself enough to sacrifice for your own benefit, to suffer for your own goodness**.

You can have the best plan, tools, and support system in the world but it won't mean anything without this CHOICE to honor your worth as a person. Make this choice and you can change your life.

If you are ready to make that happen, then let's get into it!

Part II: The Regimens

It is now time to start getting into the actual regimens. Quickly glancing over these regimens you may face the temptation to dismiss them as "too basic." Do not do this.

If you've got an electronic appliance that isn't working, before you crack it open and start running advanced diagnostics, you should probably first check to ensure that it's even plugged in. That's what we're doing here. Your brain is the most complex electrical device you will ever encounter and developing competence in these regimens ensures that you have your bases covered.

Many of our biggest problems are big in the first place because they represent something fundamental or "basic" being mishandled. It's the difference between having some cracked drywall in your house vs having a cracked foundation. I fully believe that many guys out there will be able to leave porn behind by mastering these fundamental skills.

With that being said, there will be plenty of you for whom these basics will NOT be enough. I talk about how to take your process further in *Part III* of this guide. Regardless of whether that is the case, you will still benefit greatly from getting your foundation solidly set with these behavioral pillars.

Beyond just significantly improving your life, mastering these regimens will allow you to confidently pursue deeper or more intense measures with greater effectiveness. It's about

making sure that any further building you do happens upon a foundation of rock rather than sand.

Regimen I: Self-Talk

Goal: 5 Minutes of leadership centered self-talk and/or journaling per day

In *Part I* of this guide we really hammered on how porn use is about escapism. Another way of looking at it is to view porn as a replacement for actually engaging with and managing yourself.

It's a substitute for authentically showing up and caring for yourself as if you were someone who mattered. And it totally makes sense that someone would reach for this substitute. Taking good care of ANY human is a big difficult deal. This is especially true when that human is yourself!

Once you lift your hood and start looking inside yourself, you'll likely find that you are a confusing, overwhelming being with crazy swirling emotions, desires, and thoughts that clash against a crazy overwhelming reality. You've got problems, responsibilities, and tough decisions to make. Life isn't easy, even if you are a "privileged" modern person.

It can be far more appealing to just say, "Forget this! I have no idea how to deal with any of that junk. Let's watch porn and numb out." As we stated previously though, this doesn't work. The only viable option is to figure out a better path. That's our goal with self-talk.

At its core, self-talk is about deciding to actually show up and start leading yourself to a better outcome. It's about coming to truly understand yourself and have a relationship with yourself. This isn't some wishy-washy fluff - this is hardcore practical fundamentals of life. If you improve your self-talk, your entire life will improve.

The first thing I ask someone when trying to help them learn from a relapse is, "What did your self-talk look like when you were triggered?" Usually their response is, "There was none," or, "I lied to myself with rationalization *X*".

Self-talk is the core of your self-control. If your self-talk is non-existent or dysfunctional, you will not be able to leave porn behind.

Emotional Autopilot

To have a productive conversation, you need to have two people talking. Sadly, in most people's self-talk the conversation is painfully one-sided. Specifically, it's the side of your emotions that tends to dominate what's spoken internally.

I refer to an emotionally dominated inner dialogue as "emotional autopilot." This is when you allow an emotional impulse like a craving for porn to take over your actions, leading you to act out.

Your emotional mind has a lot of power, but it's not always the smartest. Its power is that it controls the main neurochemicals that are responsible for all your core emotions and feelings (dopamine, serotonin, endorphin, oxytocin, cortisol etc.).

Its shortcoming is that it lacks the machinery for higher level rational thinking and relies heavily on instinct and conditioning. If you've got a history of regular PMO, both instinct and conditioning are working against your best interest.

Your instincts have trouble telling the difference between porn and a real sexual experience. Your conditioning has proven to you that porn is a path to intense pleasure and release.

Because of this, your emotional mind will constantly be sending emotional messages that essentially say, "Hey, you know what would be great right now? Porn. Porn would be so good for us, we should probably go masturbate to some immediately so we can feel fantastic." We call these messages "cravings."

If you allow these cravings to pass unchallenged through your mind and control your actions, then you will keep using porn.

Rational Decision Making

This is where the second party comes in. The solution to overcoming these emotional cravings is to engage your rational faculty - your intellect.

You can think of a craving arising in your emotional self, but ultimately you want it to pass through and be directed by your rational self.

Your rational self is kind of like an airport or train terminal. It can reroute the flow of energy so that you change direction from your immediate emotional impulse and instead take an action that is better for you in the long term than watching porn.

As far as I can understand, these two parts of you utilize distinct parts of your brain. Your emotional self is tied to your limbic system and your rational self is tied to your prefrontal cortex. The trick then is learning how to get that rational part to kick in when the emotional part is firing off a porn craving.

The way we will accomplish this is through self-talk. Self-talk here refers to an internal conversation where your emotional and rational selves communicate with each other. Self-talk is the habit of firing your pre-frontal cortex to help guide and analyze your emotional impulses.

The goal is to establish your rational self as the leader and friend of your emotional self, so that you can healthily respond to your emotional realities and improve your decision making when you are craving.

The Self-Talk Ritual

What you practice you will improve. If our goal is to have your rational mind show up and lead your emotional mind in the moments of craving, we need to train it to step up and speak the truth so that you have more than porn-induced cravings present to direct you.

Self-talk is a skill, and sadly it's unlikely that you were taught this skill in school. What we are going to do now is break down the act of self-talk into its specific pieces so they can be learned and mastered.

Ultimately you will want to be able to engage in natural, fluid, spontaneous and productive self-talk in your own head whenever you need it. However, this skill takes considerable time and effort to achieve.

Because of this, at first it will be most beneficial for you to be structured in your self-talk practice. The following will break down a simple self-talk ritual that you can practice daily to begin building the connection between your rational and emotional faculties.

Ritual Overview

There are five steps to the self-talk ritual (technically the first one can be split off into its own discipline, but I recommend keeping them together).

1. Ground: Tune into your body and relax your musculature
2. Connect: Be present non-judgmentally with your emotions
3. Translate: Put the main emotional threads into words
4. Respond: Let your rational mind respond to these words with truth, friendship, and leadership
5. Repeat (optional)

This process can be done in your head whenever you want, but I recommend doing it in a structured way in a journal at least once a day. Let's get into the individual pieces:

Ground

Addiction controls you through the unconscious generation of mental, emotional, and physical tension. If this tension goes unchecked, it will ultimately take over your thoughts, feelings, and finally your actions. You can think of a craving as dozens of little puppet strings of tension that pull you into trying to look at porn.

If you wish to avoid acting on an urge, you need to be able to release that tension. The skill of physical relaxation, then, is essential to self-management. Your body is like the circuit board for

your mind and emotions. Relaxing your body has a significant carryover effect to all other internal work.

Just try it out: next time you are feeling some kind of negative emotion, mentally relax any tense muscles you can sense in your body. I can guarantee that your negative emotion will become a bit less intense. We'll look at this power further in regimen II.

The first step of the self-talk ritual is to bring your awareness to your physical presence and relax your musculature. This "grounds" your mental and emotional energy kind of like a lightning rod will redirect a lightning bolt safely into the ground.

To do this is simple:

- Take a few deep, relaxing breaths.
- Mentally scan your body for physical tension and relax those muscles (you can go from head to toe if you want).
- Once relaxed, just tune into your physical senses of touch, hearing, smell, and sight (if your eyes are open).

You don't need to make anything magical happen here and can spend as much time or as little time doing this as you'd like. Some people like to make a whole meditation out of this, but for our purposes you just need to chill yourself out a little so everything else that comes after works a bit better.

Connect

Porn lets you disconnect from your emotions. It lets you temporarily nuke them into oblivion with high levels of stimulation. In this step you are going to do the opposite and connect with your emotions.

You do this by bringing your awareness to your emotional center (for most people, this is somewhere in your chest) and just allow yourself to feel and observe whatever emotional sensations are there.

The key for this step is to be non-judgmental about what you find in there. Your emotional self cannot help the way that it feels. Sometimes these feelings are intense, painful, irrational, or even just plain unhelpful.

The mistake is to judge these emotions as bad/stupid/dangerous etc. and try to squash them or avoid looking at them. For example, it may be hard to acknowledge that you are craving a particular kind of porn that the rest of you finds humiliating. In that case, you just need to observe both the humiliation and the craving side by side and simply let them be there.

Your emotions have various levels of truth and value. Some are neurological junk that hold little utility. Some emotions hold profound truths. Some are a mix of both. The only way you can sort through and properly respond to these things is if you can first unconditionally look at them.

This is all you are doing in this step - feel and observe the major emotional threads that are currently present within you.

Translate

One of the challenges of your emotional mind is that it's not great with words. It thinks primarily in the sensations that we just connected with in the previous step.

In order to do effective self-talk we need to have our rational self lend our emotional self a hand by translating those sensations into words. When you translate your emotions into words, it puts them into a form that your rational mind can work with and respond to.

So in this step, you basically just turn those main emotional currents that you connected with into a statement. Ex: "I'm upset about what my boss said to me earlier" - "Watching porn would be awesome right now" - "I'm mad at myself for not asking that girl out"

Often it's difficult to summarize an emotion in a single statement. This is when you need to "vent" a little. You might need a lot of words to capture an emotion. That's fine.

This is where journaling starts to become valuable. Just like how it's easier to do complex math on a piece of paper, it's also easier to deal with more complex emotions with paper as well.

You can think of the translate phase as a "vent" phase where you vent your emotions into verbal form. The goal is to let this stuff come out unfiltered. You don't need to moderate it or make it rational. By getting it out raw, you can more easily evaluate it for what it is.

You might find that when you let some of this stuff out raw, that you are appalled at what you find. Accept it. Just because you have an emotion doesn't mean that you agree with it, it doesn't mean you will act on it, it doesn't mean it's who you really are, and it doesn't mean you're bad. It just means that for whatever reason, a certain part of you is seeing the situation in this way.

Squashing such things down just cause them to fester and get worse. Getting it out in the open is the only way you can shift and modify it (if you even need to – sometimes simple acknowledgement is enough).

Respond

So once your emotional side speaks its piece, it's your rational side's turn to respond. The goal of your rational self should be to

1. **Speak truth**

2. **Be a friend**
3. **Be a leader**

So for example, if in your vent, your emotional self has all these ideas and desires about watching porn, then it's the job of your rational self to respond with the truth about that potential course of action.

The truth is that if you use porn then you will stay addicted, your sexuality will stay inflamed and distorted, and you will continue to run from life and fail to thrive as your best self. The truth is that porn is fake, you aren't having a sexual experience, and those women don't know who you are or give a crap about you.

The truth is that if you instead abstain from porn, the urge will be uncomfortable, but it will pass shortly. Staying clean will heal your brain, it will heal your sexuality, and it will allow you to show up to life and really live it.

If you are married or in a committed relationship, the truth is that you cannot even consider being with another woman without also considering cheating or going through a breakup/divorce. To take the image of some woman and imagine sex with her without any consequences or effort is to paint an unhelpful picture that has no basis in reality at all (which is exactly what porn trains you to do).

You need to literally feed these thoughts of truth to yourself in the moments you are triggered. You must force yourself to think them, or even speak them out loud if necessary. If you don't then they won't be able to influence your decision making. If you have trouble remembering this stuff, then that simply means you need more practice.

It's important that you do your best to deliver these truths as a friend. Your emotional mind is going to be hurting and wanting. Having your rational self show up as a jerk or a bully isn't going to make the situation much better. You are going through something challenging. Give yourself some compassion and understanding.

But at the same time you can't be *too* compassionate to the point where you let yourself give in because it's so uncomfortable. Here's where the leadership part comes in. You need to be keeping yourself focused and honest about what's truly going to give you the BEST life, not just the best temporary high. It's not good leadership to let yourself do something that's bad for you just because doing the right thing is hard.

The truth can be painful to speak to yourself, but it's the antidote that will cure you. The main ingredient of that soup we talked about earlier is truth. Sometimes the truth is painful to look at and swallow, but it's the only thing that's going to truly cure you and set you free.

Regardless of what form the truth takes, keep feeding it to yourself. It's the only thing that can moderate, overcome, and ultimately cure the dysfunctional emotional narratives within your emotional self.

Repeat

After letting your rational side respond, your emotional side will pop up again with more to say. Sometimes you need to look at the response. If there are rationalizations or arguments that hold a lot of emotional weight found in that response, then you'd better address them.

You do this by simply repeating the process again of grounding, connecting, translating and responding. As you get good at this, you gain the ability to have a literal conversation within yourself between these two different sides.

The trick is in recognizing that you don't need emotional resolution. If you try to end this process with your emotional self feeling great, then you'll just end up going in circles.

You don't need to "feel better." Sometimes the conversation ends with your rational mind speaking the truth and your emotional mind being pissed off or sad about that truth. That's fine. Your emotional mind will adapt to that truth as long as your rational mind holds the line and addresses what your emotional mind says.

For some guys, they need to emotionally go through all the stages of grief to let porn go: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. If that's your situation, then you need to be brave enough to go through it. If you lie to yourself with some kind of rationalization or simply avoid looking at the truth in the first place then you are just going to be prolonging your suffering.

Summary

To summarize this self-talk ritual again:

1. Ground: Tune into your body and relax your musculature
2. Connect: Be present non-judgmentally with your emotions
3. Translate: Put the main emotional threads into words
4. Respond: Let your rational mind respond to these words with truth, friendship, and leadership
5. Repeat (optional)

The goal is to ultimately be able to do this when you are triggered with cravings so that you can remind yourself of the truth and stay clean.

To be able to show up during crunch time, I recommend practicing this supportive self-talk all day, but at least once a day sit down and do it in a more formal manner in your journal. As little as five minutes a day can be an absolute game changer here.

As you do this consistently, magic happens. Basically, your emotions will become re-trained to be in alignment with truth rather than opposed to it. So instead of your positive emotions being aligned with negative things (desire for porn) and negative emotions being aligned with positive things (discomfort at staying clean), things get flipped.

Your positive emotions will be aligned with positive things (like living an awesome life) and your negative emotions will be aligned with negative things (like porn). Once this starts happening,

life gets exponentially easier. Imagine if you actually wanted to do the things that were good for you and the thought of doing bad stuff for you filled you with distaste or even revulsion?

Believe it or not, this can and WILL happen if you continue to practice this kind of authentic self-talk. The payoff is worth the effort.

Regimen II: Energy Management

Goal: Develop and follow a reasonable energy management system of rest, exercise and nutrition

Quitting porn is a challenging thing. To succeed, you need to make sure that you have the appropriate level of energy to power good decision making in the face of hardship while maintaining your supporting disciplines.

Showing up to life and engaging with it will tax your mental, emotional, and physical energy reserves. You can have all the knowledge in the world, but if you lack the energy to put that knowledge into action then that knowledge is worthless. Therefore, establishing a routine of energetic self-care is essential for anyone looking to live on the front line of their life and stop the escapism of porn use.

In this regimen we are going to outline an energy management system that anyone can follow no matter where they are starting from.

Porn as a Substitute for Personal Energy Management

Porn is a rather strange thing when you look at it from an energy management perspective. On one hand you can use it to boost your energy. Many guys will PMO first thing in the morning to wake them up or when they are tired and want a little kick. On the other hand, you can also use porn to decompress and relax. Many guys use porn last thing before bed or when they are stressed out and want to chill.

I believe this is due to the combination of how porn stimulates your dopamine receptors which gives you a feeling of excitement, but then orgasm releases endorphins which can help you feel relaxed and at ease.

The result is that you've got this seemingly magical energy management technique that gives you a bigger kick than a cup of coffee but also is more relaxing than your average sleeping pill.

If you've been using porn to help manage your energy, then when you go to cut it out you are going to go through periods of feeling energetically out of sorts. You will be missing the energy that PMO would give you, but you will also be stuck with the energy that PMO allowed you to release.

This issue is compounded by the fact that the behaviors involved in quitting porn tax these systems further. Overriding porn urges, enacting new habits, and living a productive life simultaneously use your energy stores while also filling you with various stresses and tensions.

Unless you take your energy management seriously, you will be jeopardizing the success of your reboot.

Rest, Exercise, and Nutrition

It's no secret what the keys to managing your energy levels are. You need rest, you need exercise, and you need nutrition. The challenge is that implementing changes in these areas can be quite difficult and energetically costly on a mental, emotional, and physical level. If you want to increase your energy you need to spend your energy.

For example, to improve your sleeping patterns you may have to face periods of initial tiredness while your body adjusts. To improve your diet you might have to face and overcome significant craving. To begin exercising you'll likely face emotional resistance along with the obvious physical resistance.

In all cases, you might face overwhelm trying to figure out exactly what changes to make and what program to follow etc. Trying to choose from the hundreds of different diets and exercise programs out there can be seriously daunting, especially when combined with the often extreme rhetoric and marketing around these various different options.

This puts the rebooter in a bit of a bind: if you don't make any changes to your energy management, you will likely fall into an imbalanced state that hinders your reboot. But if you try to make too many changes on this level you will ALSO fall into an imbalanced state. **The key then is to make sure that any changes you make are exceedingly reasonable based upon your current circumstances and goals.**

This is exactly what this regimen is designed to help you do. I want to outline a progression of simple changes that can bolster your energy levels and support the lifestyle changes that reboot demands.

In this regimen I outline three distinct levels of change for rest, exercise, and nutrition. If you only think you can handle a small amount of change in these areas, then stick with a level 1 or 2 change. If you are already doing pretty good in an area, then you may wish to consider a level 3 change or simply maintain what is working for you.

The main purpose here is to make sure that you patch up any glaring energetic weak points that could be compromising your ability to make good decisions and quit porn, NOT become the world’s “healthiest” person.

Energy Management 1: Rest

Increasing your amount of rest might be the single most important lifestyle change you can make in your rebooting journey. Our modern world is full of a near infinite amount of stimulation and things to do. The paradox is that in order to engage most effectively with this world, rejuvenating disengagement is absolutely critical.

If you are continuously pushing yourself without a break or consuming non-stop electronic stimulation, then you are likely suffering from a massive energetic deficit that prevents you from having the energy to think clearly, make good decisions, and take good actions. Learning how to rest is the only way to fix this.

Here are the three levels of rest we'll be talking about:

- Level 1: Electronic Shut off Time
- Level 2: Go to Bed Earlier
- Level 3: Naps

Rest Level 1: Electronic Shut off Time

It's not very controversial to say that modern people are addicted to technology. We constantly whip out our cell phones or plop down on our computers to surf the internet and get our stimulation fix.

Constantly texting, using social media, consuming news, binging Netflix or surfing websites like imgur and reddit can seriously drain you. Many of these things are fine in moderation, but when they are used compulsively in a non-stop manner they put you in a seriously unhelpful autopilot mode of pleasure seeking.

The more frequently and unconsciously you grab for the next piece of stimulating content, the more easily you can slip into porn use. Porn is the king of the electronic stimulation jungle and kind of like an electronic Rome, all roads seem to lead to it eventually.

I can't tell you the number of times I've listened to someone's relapse story and it followed the pattern of: "I just started surfing website *X* and then one thing led to another and all of a sudden I was watching porn."

One of the simplest changes you can make to manage this drain on your mental and emotional energy is to create electronic shut off periods. These are simply times where you put electronics away. Shut down your computer and plug your phone into the wall so you can't make a split second bad decision.

For most guys, this should happen at some point at night an hour or two before bed. One of the most vulnerable times for a rebooter is usually if they are up late on the computer. At night

your willpower and decision-making ability naturally declines, so by unplugging from electronics during that time, you increase your ability to stay clean.

However, this shut off doesn't just need to happen at night. I recommend creating a shut off whenever you tend to struggle. So for example, if you struggle first thing in the morning, don't turn your phone on until you get to work. If you struggle after work, plug your phone into the wall right when you get home.

Stepping away from the stimulation can do a lot for your ability to relax into more useful down time activities like reading, socialization, or engaging in any of the other things that I outline in this guide, and it's usually a pretty simple change to enact.

Rest Level 2: Go to Bed Earlier

You need rest. Your body only produces enough chemicals like insulin, serotonin and dopamine, to last you 16 hours or so. After that point, you need to sleep to replenish them. Beyond this, your body and mind need to repair itself from the wear and tear of life. It does this predominantly during sleep.

In my years of helping guys quit porn, I think that I've recommended to get more sleep more than almost anything else. I know I'm not alone - my friend and business partner Alexander Rhodes (the creator of NoFap) is well known for proselytizing the benefits of improved sleep hygiene for rebooters. The reason is because it works. Sleep is unbelievably vital for optimal functioning. The issue is that many of us live in a state of chronic sleep deprivation.

Here's a great article from James Clear that breaks down the importance of sleep and how to get more of it.

Many of the initially studied benefits of sleep were linked to the deep sleep that comes early in the sleep cycle. I believe this has led many people into thinking that as long as they get 6 to 7 hours of sleep then they are all good.

But as science has progressed, we've come to understand that REM sleep (which tends to come later in the sleep cycle) is more and more important, especially for decision making and emotional processing. In order to maximize REM sleep you should be sleeping 8-10 hours. Here's another article that talks a bit more about this.

I fully believe that these extra hours of REM-dense sleep are of massive benefit to rebooters who are doing the serious work of attempting to significantly rewire their brains. Without this sleep, I think you are much more likely to make poor decisions and fail to properly learn from your experiences. So try and get as much sleep as you can.

This change requires a bit more sacrifice and lifestyle maneuvering than simply engaging in an electronic shut off. You need to learn how to see going to bed as a gain rather than a loss, but I'm confident you'll feel the benefits quickly. Prioritizing sleep could be one of the most important changes you introduce into your rebooting regimen.

Rest Level 3: Naps

What if instead of reaching for another cup of coffee, some porn or other technological stimulation when you are lagging, you just gave your body what it really wanted and took a little nap?

People often associate napping with being lazy, but many of the most productive, successful people are extremely disciplined in their napping. Bret McKay over at the Art of Manliness has a great article on napping as well as one on 8 famous nappers. I recommend you check them both out.

The reason I put naps at level 3 is that for most people, working in a nap will take a little extra effort. If you work for yourself or you are a student with spread out classes, then napping is fairly easy. However, if you work a standard 9 to 5, things get a bit trickier.

If you fall into this category but still want to nap, you may need to nap in your car, book an office meeting space to nap there, or employ some other sneaky measure.

A nap doesn't always need to be an hour and a half affair where you draw the curtains and get under the covers (though that can be great too). The thing that helped me get my napping skills up was to recognize that even a short, 10-minute nap, fully-clothed, in a well-lit room, while sitting in a chair, was STILL energizing and worthwhile.

I've found that napping nearly doubles the amount of time I can engage in intense cognitive work like content creation. It also can help me compensate if I had trouble sleeping the night before. Most importantly, it allows you to decompress without relying on porn while also recharging your decision-making circuits.

For someone who is going through the challenging process of reboot, I can't think of a better tool than the nap (though if you associate lying down with porn, you might need to be extra intentional at first).

Rest Conclusion

I know I used to think that if I let myself fall in love with sleep and rest, I'd be missing out and losing productivity. I've found it's just the opposite. The more I rest, the more energy I have to make aligned and productive choices.

Unless you have a problem with sleeping too much as a form of escape (some people fall into this category) then getting more rest is probably one of the best things to focus on during your reboot journey.

Energy Management 2: Exercise

If you want to have more energy, you need to use more energy. Your body adapts to the demands that are put upon it. This is where exercise comes in. By forcing your body to regularly move, it will grow stronger.

Many rebooters have reported that the incorporation of exercise played a major role in their ability to successfully quit porn. Not only does regular exercise increase your overall energy levels, it also helps you relax. One of the best ways to blow off some steam is to get a good workout in.

The big issue is that developing a structured exercise routine can be quite challenging for many people. You need to either create your own program or choose from the thousands that exist online.

If your plan involves going to the gym for the first time then you need to overcome the social discomfort of doing something new in front of people you don't know. And then on top of that there's the general emotional resistance of breaking out of your body's comfort zone and pushing it in some way.

Put simply, some guys may not have the energy or drive to deal with all of that when they are already pushing themselves to quit porn. I think having a physical training regimen is a great thing for most people, but I'm not so black and white as to believe that absolutely every guy needs this in order to quit porn (and may actually be a bad move for some).

Because of this, I've tried my best to offer some simpler ways to start getting the benefits of exercise for your reboot without demanding that you successfully build a gym routine. This is already a challenging point of your life and it may not be time to add THAT challenge as well.

Here are the levels of exercise we will examine:

- Exercise Level 1: Stretching
- Exercise Level 2: Walking
- Exercise Level 3: Training Routine

Exercise Level 1: Stretching

If you remember, back in the grounding phase of the self-talk ritual we discussed how porn urges were like puppet strings of tension trying to pull your eyes, mind, and body into the act of PMO.

From this perspective, one of the key elements of successfully quitting porn is learning how to consciously release that tension before it pulls you into acting as someone that you don't want to be. The grounding activity of relaxing your muscles and becoming present in your body is greatly aided by engaging in some kind of physical stretching.

We normally think of the body being controlled by the brain, but the relationship also works the other way. What you do with the body impacts the brain. By moving and stretching your body, you can influence your neurochemistry.

For example - studies have shown that simply standing in "power poses" increase the level of testosterone that you produce.

By going through a series of stretches when you feel the tension of a porn trigger mounting, I believe you can actively release a large amount of that tension safely.

This doesn't need to be anything extreme, just a minute or two of stretching can completely shake up the way you feel. If you want, you can just go through the stretches you did before sports as a kid. If you've never really stretched before, here's a simple five-minute stretching routine.

I personally don't really like yoga much, but plenty of people are crazy about it and claim it's super helpful. So whether you want to do an all-out yoga routine or just some simple office stretches, you will be greatly benefited by incorporating these into your routine.

If you aren't ready or interested in developing a full exercise routine, just doing some stretching as a regular part of your day can do wonders for your mental and physical balance. I personally prefer to stretch in the evening before bed to release the tension I've built up during the day.

Exercise Level 2: Walking

Walking is amazing. I'd put it up there with more sleep as one of those major baseline changes that can have a huge impact. The benefits of walking seem almost too good to be true.

I don't think they are, I just think we've lost what we've historically always had because of the uniquely sedentary nature of modern life. Humans are designed to walk every day. And since that's the case, that's probably what you should do.

Walks are one of the few things that mimic the energy balancing power of PMO (though in a less intense and more healthy way). If you are tired, taking a walk can wake you up. If you are stressed and filled with tension, taking a walk can also help you relax.

Now, a lot of people enjoy longer (30-60+ minute walks) and I do too sometimes. But honestly, it's the short walk (5-10 minutes) done multiple times a day that I've become utterly addicted to. I've found that shorter walks are basically just an "all good" with no real downside once you get used to doing them. They just make you feel better.

I was introduced to this idea through Stan Efferding, the world's strongest bodybuilder. Stan is a smart man who has been successful in many areas of life and is worth listening to. Check out this video where he breaks down the thought process behind the 10-minute walk.

Basically, just go for a little walk after your meals or whenever you're triggered. It could be a walk around your block, around your office building, whatever. If you don't want to do 10 minutes, that's cool, do 5.

Walks like this can also be excellent for managing transitions. You know how when you finish one task you whip out your cell phone to look at something stupid (like porn) for 10 minutes (or longer) before you move on to the next thing? You could instead go for a little walk, get your blood flowing, get some fresh air, and go into that next task energized and fresh rather than with a dopamine hangover.

The only people who may not get as much value from this tip are the people who are already on their feet all day for their job (but even they could potentially enjoy a change of scenery). For everyone else who is mostly sedentary during the day, walking is amazing. Do it.

Exercise Level 3: Training Routine

If you are willing and able to take on a bit more in the exercise department, then you may greatly benefit from adopting some kind of structured training routine. Developing an intentional fitness routine can do wonders for body composition, energy levels, and basic enjoyment of life.

The options here are tremendous. You could get into barbell training, calisthenics, basketball, mountain biking, martial arts, whatever gets you moving your body and bringing the benefits that you want.

When it comes to what to pick, the best exercise is the one that you will do. This is determined by how much you enjoy the activity combined with how much you want the results.

So for example, I think there's a strong case to be made that intelligent barbell training is probably the most efficient and effective method for developing the most universally beneficial physical adaptations.

But if you hate the idea of barbell training and know you won't do it, then that argument means NOTHING. If you would much rather go for a run, then go for the freaking run, because *at least you are doing something*. And when it comes to a training routine, something is almost always better than nothing.

I say "almost always" because it *is* possible to push yourself too hard, get too obsessed, put too much pressure on yourself, deplete your energy reserves, and lower your ability to make good decisions and relapse.

So it's essential that you adopt a *sensible* training routine and recognize that a reboot is probably not the time to try and aim for extremely demanding fitness goals. You can always aim higher once porn is successfully removed from your life.

As for choosing a program, there are a million different options out there. My advice is to pick something you think is cool. Developing fitness as a passion and hobby is one of the most

rewarding lifestyle changes you can make. If you aren't ready to go all out right now, that's fine - just stick with stretches and walks, but I encourage you to consider finding something more at some point.

Nutrition

In terms of topics that hold the most dissent and conflicting ideas, politics and religion probably are at the top. But not too much further down the list is nutrition. There are million different diets out there, each one claiming to be the best.

This confusion is compounded by the fact that there's been a lot of bad science done by food and supplement companies basically paying for distorted (or simply inaccurate) data points that will allow them to sell more product and make more money.

When it comes to quitting porn, nutrition isn't really *that* important. There's no magic diet that's going to make your cravings go away. There's no magic supplement that's going to make you reboot twice as fast.

The reason we are looking at nutrition at all is because if your diet is poor enough, it CAN hold you back. Additionally, learning how to feed yourself decently is a powerful lifestyle choice centered around personal responsibility and self-care. This fits nicely within the rebooting framework.

So, the main goal of this section is to simply move your nutrition out of the "terrible" range and open the door to a higher level of self-care and personal discipline. If your diet is already decent enough, you might not need to make any changes in this area.

Here are the levels we'll be looking at

- Level 1: Eat Meals
- Level 2: Eat Whole Foods
- Level 3: General Diet Plan

Nutrition Level 1: Eat Meals

This first level isn't even really about the foods themselves, it's about the way you eat them. If you mostly just shove substances in your face while you are on the move or engaging in other activities, you are not eating a meal, you are simply consuming.

I believe that only *part* of the energetic value of a meal is the actual food consumed. I believe that a significant portion of the value is of a psychological and neurological value. Your autonomic nervous system has two states: a sympathetic state ("fight or flight" or "do hard work" state) and a parasympathetic state ("rest and digest" or comfort and connection zone).

If you don't actually chill out and relax when you are eating, then I believe your body struggles to enter into this parasympathetic state. I think this does a few negative things:

1. Likely leads to poorer food choices where you pick quick and easy over nutritious
2. Leads to less effective digestion which hurts your energy levels (and potentially also causes physical discomfort)
3. Contributes to mental burnout since you've minimized your rest state, which in turn leads to poorer decision making

When you sit down and allow yourself to relax into an actual meal, you let your body enter fully into this parasympathetic state. If you engage in this kind of meal-time relaxation the typical three times per day (breakfast, lunch, dinner), then 3 times per day you are allowing your body to enter into this valuable state of rejuvenation.

If you then enhance that state with a relaxing walk after, I think you will see significant benefits to your energy levels and mood. The bottom line is that you need breaks. If you don't create these breaks consciously and healthily, then you will create them UNhealthily (like with porn).

So do yourself a favor and sit down and eat meals. I recommend 3-4 a day. If you want to do less because you are doing intermittent fasting then fine, just make sure you find a system that doesn't stress your system to the point of counter-productivity.

Nutrition Level 2: Eat Whole Foods

I'd recommend trying to get roughly 80% of your calories from whole foods rather than processed foods. A whole food is a food comprised of one ingredient like an egg, a cup of rice, an apple, a carrot, a glass of water etc. A processed food usually has an ingredient list that looks like an inventory sheet at a chemical factory.

For the most part, whole foods have better overall nutritional value than processed foods. Processed foods often add a lot of preservatives, sweeteners and artificial flavors that may not really serve your overall health and energy levels.

What's more, is that many processed foods are designed more to be addictive than to actually provide nutrition. They are engineered to provide intense flavor spikes that cause you to keep reaching for (and buying) more. This kind of binge activity is associated with a similar mindset and attitude that's connected to the compulsive grab of the porn addict.

By focusing on eating approximately 80% whole foods, chances are you will be feeding your body more than you are feeding compulsive behavior. Not only will this help your energy levels, but it will also contribute to a lifestyle of doing what's good for yourself rather than what's simply instantly gratifying (don't get me wrong, whole foods can be *delicious,* but not in the same way that junk food is).

I would also include drinking water over sugary drinks like soda or fruit juice in this level. In fact, if you are big soda drinker, just switching mostly to water can make a major difference to the

way that you feel. If you don't drink enough water, focusing on getting more can do a surprising amount for how you feel.

I wouldn't worry about going too black and white and trying to force yourself into 100% whole foods only. Being too extreme is going to be incredibly difficult for the average person and will likely end up creating more stress and conflict that just makes your reboot harder.

You can enjoy a donut here and there, but if you are going to try and implement this discipline level, just make sure that the majority of your calories come from whole foods.

Nutrition Level 3: General Diet Plan

Having a more structured diet plan is like having a more structured physical training regimen - it's fantastic if you can get on board with it. Again, deciding WHAT structure to pick is where the challenge lies.

As I've intimated previously, I do NOT recommend doing something extreme with your diet during your reboot. This can just create excess stress when your priority should be maximizing your energy levels for making good decisions, not doing some stupid crash diet that's going to make you hate your life and want to escape from it even more.

Additionally, you also need to look at the practical considerations. If your diet requires you to do additional meal prep or shopping, then you need to work that into your schedule and weekly plan (which we cover in the next regimen). Unless you're certain it's a good fit, you probably want to avoid a diet that's incredibly labor-intensive.

If you want a structured program, I recommend picking something reasonable you are interested in and trying to follow it for at least a period (4-6 weeks is usually enough to figure out how something works for you). Then, evaluate and figure out if you want to modify or change anything. Trial and error is just part of managing yourself.

For example, I've tried a ton of different things like bodybuilding bulks, the ketogenic diet, a few kinds of intermittent fasting, IIFYM, religious fasting etc. Each diet taught me something and through my experimentation I've developed my own sort of diet plan. I pretty much just hit the first two levels I already recommended, combined with maintaining a general macronutrient ratio where I prioritize protein each meal, lean more on fat in the morning, and carbs in the evening.

Through my experimentation, I've found this gives me pretty solid energy levels, supports my body composition goals, and requires minimal effort. But it took me trying a bunch of different crap to figure out what works for my body, my work, and my level of activity.

Doing this work kind of experimentation can absolutely be a worthwhile investment and contribute to a lifestyle of discipline and self-care. You just want to make sure that you are investing at the right rate. It's more important that you stay clean from porn and complete your reboot rather than force yourself to choke down another kale shake.

Regimen III: Productivity

Goal: Create and follow both weekly and daily plans

In order to live a fulfilling life that you don't want to constantly escape from by using porn, you need to be productive. This productivity requires that you get clear on your priorities, take care of your main responsibilities, and make meaningful progress in your life.

Yes, quitting porn will require some specific focus on your reboot, but most of the "work" of rebooting is just about doing better things with your time. In order to do this you need to have a system that keeps you focused and moving in the right direction.

The goal of this regimen is to help you establish your own system for productivity so that you can maintain forward progress in your life and leave the masturbatory life of porn behind.

Status matters

One of the main things to understand when approaching productivity is how porn acts as a substitute for real status. We humans care deeply about status, it's literally wired into the mechanisms of our brain. When our status in areas we care about goes up, we feel good, and when our status declines or is threatened, we feel bad.

The reason we evolved this way is because the accumulation of meaningful status is inherently tied to a person's personal and genetic survival and success. So for example, if you are a man who accumulates physical, financial, social and moral status, chances are you will not only be more secure and happy personally, but you will also have an excellent chance at reproducing and passing on your genes.

From this perspective it makes sense that you care about status. Anyone who claims to not care about status because they believe it's egotistical or something is just unconsciously trying to earn some sort of higher *moral* status.

The reason why caring about status gets a bad rep sometimes is because if you go so far as to *identify* with your status and define others by their status, then you can justify some pretty horrible stuff; i.e. "If you are poor, ugly, less intelligent, of the ‘wrong’ race, or lack any status I value, then you have less inherent worth and value as a human being so I can treat you worse."

Obviously, that’s really screwed up and I am not supporting that. So to be clear, when I talk about status here, I'm separating inherent human dignity with measurable differences in personal attributes and competence. I believe people have unconditional and equal human dignity, but clearly have different levels of measurable status (and this difference matters).

Porn is a substitute for authentic status

One of the main reasons I believe that porn is such a powerful escape is because it allows you to step out of your current perception of status into a virtual world where you get to pretend that you are this sexual stud experiencing massive sexual success.

Instead of being the guy who missed a deadline at work and got reamed out by the boss in front of everyone (low status), you can instead be the guy having sex with three women at once (high status). Instead of being that guy who still lives at home and is too afraid to ask a girl on a date, you can have a harem of virtual women willing to serve your every desire.

The problem is that when you continuously feed your emotional self this illusion of sexual success, you are crippling your motivational systems. You essentially trick your emotional self into thinking, "If I'm being so 'successful,' why should I change? Why should I push myself?"

Porn addicts often really struggle with motivation and drive. No wonder - they keep tricking their emotional systems responsible for their motivation into thinking that they are experiencing all this "genetic success" and hence have no need to change. Human biology is efficient, why would it give you energy and drive to fix what isn't broken?

The big areas of status that most guys need to focus on are:

- Sexual status: how do you feel about your romantic life?
- Performance: How well you perform in your major occupations (school/work)
- Financial status: how do you feel about the amount of money you make?
- Social status: how do you feel about your standing at work, in your friend group, and in society in general?
- Physical status: how do you feel about your own body?
- Moral status: how well do you live according to your own highest conceptions of goodness? (I believe people rightfully place this as the most important)

All these things are connected. Bringing up your status in one area can improve your standing in another. It can be intensely challenging to take a sober look at where you stand on these levels, it makes sense why so many guys reach for porn.

The problem is that the more you reach for porn to escape rather than take meaningful action in these areas, the further you will decline. **The underlying point here is that you need to identify the status that best honors your ideals and dignity and then do the work to acquire it.** Unless you do this, quitting porn simply forces you to be more present in a reality where you don't feel (and perhaps measurably *aren't*) good enough in areas that matter to you.

50% Mindset 50% Hustle

Not everybody can be at the top in every area. You probably won't ever be as good looking as Brad Pitt, as rich as Warren Buffett, or as athletic as Lebron James. I know I won't be anyway.

Sometimes our status is limited by things outside our control like our genetics or life circumstance, and sometimes our status is limited because we need to make choices with our energy and can only excel in so many areas.

Because of this, half the battle is mindset. For the status you are going to pursue, you need to accept where you are, where you realistically could reach, and how long it might take to get there. For the status you can't or won't pursue, you need to let it go.

This kind of mindset is equal parts humility and dignity. You need to **choose** that you are unconditionally worth the effort of pursuing your best (dignity), but you also need to **choose** to love yourself even with your imperfections and limitations (humility). If you refuse to make these choices, then you will never feel "good enough."

At the end of the day, the core status you are reaching to achieve is to be someone that YOU admire. Imagine someone who had the exact same circumstances, abilities, and opportunities that you do. How would that person have to behave for you to admire them? That image should be the compass for your own behavior.

After that, it's just about getting stuff done. You need to set your goals that align with your vision and just do it. Not only do you need to mentally believe that you are worth the effort of living well and making progress, you need to embody that self-love with productive action.

Getting Your Priorities Straight

So once you acknowledge that you need to make some changes and progress, the next thing is to get clear on what exactly to focus on first. While everyone's circumstances are different and there's no foolproof answer to this question, there is a general formula that seems to work well for most people.

Here's how I recommend you prioritize your goal setting while engaging in reboot:

1. Setting up your reboot regimen by utilizing the content from this guide
2. Competence in core responsibilities
3. New areas of progress

In other words, you want to make sure that you truly put first things first. If your main goal is to quit porn, then you need to prioritize the things that are going to let you do that. So this includes the stuff that we've talked about so far like building the habit of self-talk and incorporating your chosen energy management disciplines. These will primarily fit into the "habit tracking" section of the system that we'll cover in a moment.

Other things of priority level 1 would be anything else that enhances your connection to truth, such as spiritual practices (prayer, scripture etc.), working through my porn recovery course, or really anything else that helps you connect with your higher morals and values. This kind of stuff supercharges your self-talk capabilities.

Once you get these foundational regimens in place, you will want to focus on your core responsibilities such as your work (or schoolwork if you are a student), family responsibilities, and other non-negotiable activities that should come before anything else.

It is only after getting things moving well in these basic areas that I recommend expanding your focus to bigger goals. If you need to spend a couple weeks or months solidifying your foundation, that's fine. It could take a little bit to get used to journaling, managing your energy, and being productive at work/school. But once you start getting this down, you might want to start expanding your life changes.

So if one of your big goals is to enter a romantic relationship, maybe this is the point where you start prioritizing dating and hitting the gym a bit harder. If you want a career shift, maybe you start working on that business you've been dreaming of building. If you are an artist, maybe you decide to start taking your art production more seriously. Maybe it's as simple as going out, getting involved in some activity and making some new friends.

It's the goals on this level that often have the biggest personal impact in terms of life satisfaction. The issue is that people often try to sprint into them without building the proper foundation first and then are unable to sustain themselves. So if you follow the plan I've outlined here, you should be able to steadily improve your status in the areas that best represent your ideals.

Productivity System

So now that we've identified the value of productivity and a general order of priorities, the following information we'll cover in this regimen is about how to set up your own baseline productivity system so that you can set achievable goals and make sustainable progress.

If you've already got a system that works great for you, then awesome, use that. I still recommend reading through this section though, because there may be some useful information that can improve your process.

The system is fairly simple and was inspired by the Zen to Done method and Getting Results the Agile Way, but modified and simplified in certain aspects.

The overall method is quite straight forward: you basically just make a plan for the week and a plan for each day. For both the weekly and daily plans you separate the most important tasks from the less important ones. I've purposely kept the core system minimalistic, but I'll also later point out some areas where you can enhance this system if you need to.

The real value of this planning is that you are making decisions and limiting your main foci. When you are just flying by the seat of your pants without a plan, there is the tendency to start

too much, finish too little, or just get overwhelmed and default to the path of least resistance (which often includes PMO).

Setup

For your planning, I recommend sticking with pen and paper or simple digital documents like text or note files. Personally, I do all my self-talk journaling with pen and paper and my productivity planning in digital. I find a digital format more efficient for creating and updating plans (plus I'm on the computer when I work anyway), but after working on the computer all day I love to sit down with my nice fountain pen and special journaling notebook to write and draw. However, plenty of people do great with all digital or all analog systems.

If you want to plan digitally, OneNote, Evernote, or Simplenote will probably work well for you. These are mature cross platform products that probably won't disappear anytime soon. Alternatively, if you have a programming background I recommend your preferred text editor combined with txt or markdown files for ultimate future-proofing and efficiency (I use a highly customized version of Vim + dropbox).

I do NOT recommend standard to-do list applications. After using literally dozens of these kinds of apps I've come to the conclusion that most to-do list apps are both too efficient and too inefficient at the same time.

On one hand, they are too efficient in that they make it easy to add a million things to which are not currently relevant and ultimately create mental clutter. But on the other hand, they are often too inefficient when it comes to cleaning, organization, prioritization, and review. It's easy to get bogged down in complex tagging systems, priority matrices and built up recurring tasks.

When you use the system I outline here, single sheet has all the information you need for a given week or day. Additionally, cleaning, organization, and prioritization is built into the system. Every day and every week you just start the planning system anew. If you want to review, you just flip through your entries and can easily see what you got done when.

Another part that's nice about this system is that by regularly having to write down and update your plan, you are doing the work of priming your brain and setting your focus (which is the main point of planning in the first place). I find that this tends to be more useful than a quick glance at some pre-made digital list or an inbox of yesterday's unfinished tasks. It may seem paradoxical but sometimes it's more efficient to be less efficient.

You don't have to take my advice here and can use whatever app or system you want and probably still do just fine *as long as you stick to it and take action*. You'll just have to create/use a different system or adapt what I'm saying here to fit what you're doing.

Week Plan

Your productivity starts with your week plan where you get clear about what you want to accomplish for the week. There are three main components:

- Habit Tracker
- MIT's
- To-do’s

Here’s an example of what this plan might look like for a college student looking to quit porn and connect with women more authentically:

```
WEEK 22 PLAN

HABIT TRACKER
=============
                          M   T   W   T   F   S   S
PMO Free [22]            [x] [x] [x] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
Self-talk meditation     [x] [o] [x] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
10 Minute Walk           [o] [o] [x] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

MIT's
=====

• [ ] 8 hours of school work
• [ ] Approach and talk to 5 women
• [ ] Finish Module 2 of the NoFap Academy Course

TO-DO's
=======

• [ ] Call Jeff
• [ ] Return my books to the library
• [ ] Do laundry
- [ ] Clean room
• [ ] Buy a present for Mother's Day
```

Habit Tracker

The habit tracker is just a simple grid that you can use to track any new habit you are trying to build. If you hit that habit for the day, you mark an X; if you don't you mark an O.

If you've already internalized a habit or are doing alright with it, don't track it, that just adds clutter. I'd limit this section to three habits at once because for the most part, you can only really sustainably change a few variables in your life at a time.

Once you feel comfortable with the habit and have internalized it pretty well, then feel free to stop tracking it and add something else. Just remember that not all habits are created equal. If you end up dropping more important habits to make room for less important ones, then you are making a bad trade.

If you want to track a streak longer than a week then you can do what I did in the example above, where I put a “[22]” next to no PMO which means that at the beginning of the week, you were already 22 days clean, by the end then you’ll be 29 days clean.

If you are following the plan here, then you should initially use this tracker to focus on your self-talk/journaling and energy management routines until you’ve incorporated them as a part of your life.

MIT's

MIT stands for Most Important Task. These are the major things you need to accomplish to feel like you are moving forward in your life.

You want to separate these things out from your other tasks because if anything must get dropped or pushed back, you need to know that it's not going to be one of these things. I recommend keeping your MIT’s around 3 or so. Some weeks I'll just have one or two, some weeks I'll maybe bump it up to four or (rarely) five.

You want to make sure you keep your MIT's measurable. If it's a completion-based goal such as "finish project X" then it's easy, if you got it done then you can cross off the MIT. But for other things you'll have to come up with your own measurement.

For me, MIT's tend to be time-based goals. So for example, instead of "Work on course" I'll have "Hit 12 hours of content creation for my new course." But time isn’t the only unit of measurement you can use. So if you're a salesman, instead of writing "Make a bunch of cold calls," a better MIT would be "Make 100 cold calls".

For the most part I recommend setting your goal at the median between your ideal outcome and your minimum acceptable outcome. So for example, let's say my ideal outcome would be to do 15 hours of content creation, but the minimum I'd deem acceptable would be 8 hours. In that case I'd probably aim for around 11-12 hours. If I got more - awesome. If I got a little less - I'm still pretty happy.

Part of goal setting comes from experience. It takes some trial and error to understand your capacity to get stuff done. In the beginning I'd focus on keeping your goals simple and super achievable. As you develop your willpower, focus, and momentum you can always aim higher.

The important thing is develop your habit of crossing off your MIT's. This is best accomplished by making your goals reasonable and doable.

General To-Do's

Separate from your MIT list, you just have a general to-do list. This is where you throw the other stuff you'd like to get done this week that's not important enough to be an MIT. This is where I'll put down chores, one-off tasks and stuff like that. Often I'll add to this section and update it throughout the week.

Sometimes I get everything done on my general task list. Sometimes I don't. Sometimes I'll carry those unfinished tasks over to next week's plan. Sometimes I decide they aren't really that important and delete them altogether. The key to keeping with a productivity system is for it to be flexible in the right spots. You want to be less flexible with the completion of your MIT's and more flexible with the completion of your general to-do's.

Sometimes the best move is to procrastinate on something and focus your energy on more important things (like hitting your MIT's and big habit changes like quitting PMO).

Day Plan

So now that you've got an idea of what you want to accomplish for the week, you need to figure out what you are going to get done today.

Every morning (or night before) you want to:

1. Look at your week plan (and calendar if you keep one) to see what's on the table
2. Update any habits you're tracking in your week plan (did you stay clean?)
3. Break off the pieces of your week plan that you want to accomplish and put them on your day plan
4. Identify any critical points that will make or break your success for that day

For your day plan we'll use a similar format to the week plan in that we'll separate your daily MIT's from just your general tasks. We'll also add a special section for "Critical Points" where you identify key forks in the road that will have a big impact on your personal success.

Here's an example of a day plan taken from the same college student we looked at earlier

```
Monday June 4, 2018

MIT's
=====

• [ ] 2 hours of work on Biology Project
• [ ] Approach and talk to at least one woman I don't know
• [ ] Watch a video from the NoFap Academy Course

CRITICAL POINTS
===============

• When I get back from class I'll want to watch porn, especially if approaching
a woman felt awkward or didn't go well. Instead I'm going to watch my video
from the NoFap Academy course and then either clean my room or go get a meal
depending on how I feel.

TASKS
=====

• [ ] Return Library Books
• [ ] Clean room
```

So if I had 12 hours of content creation for my week plan, I'll probably shoot for 3 hours of content that day. If I have a lot of appointments or other tasks, maybe I'll only aim for one or two. Regardless, this will go in my MIT section for the day.

Like with the week plan, you want to limit the number of daily MIT's to around 3 or less. For the other tasks you'd like to get done, you separate them off into your general to-do list for the day.

Critical Points

The one special thing for the daily plan I recommend including is the identification of "critical points." These points are essentially crucial forks in the road that you know can make or break your success for showing up as someone you admire for the day.

So for example, let's say you've got some important stuff you want to get done after you get home from work. However, you know that your pattern once you get home is to lie down on your couch, start surfing social media, end up on porn, and PMO. So that time right after work would be a critical point.

In your day plan, you'd want to identify that pattern and remind yourself of what you are going to do INSTEAD. Don't just write, "Don't lie on couch & PMO after work", instead, outline the

alternative path of action like, "When I get home from work, immediately get changed and go for a decompressing walk to avoid my PMO relaxation pattern."

By making the decision of what you are going to do in these key moments AHEAD of time, you just need to REMEMBER what you are going to do in the moment rather than come up with it on the spot. It's easier to remember than to create, especially when you might be tired or distracted when that moment arises.

Optional Enhancements

As a solopreneur with multiple projects, clients and responsibilities it takes me a bit more to be organized than most people. If you are in a similar boat, then you might need a more than the baseline system I've outlined here to get organized and focused.

Here are some other things you may wish to investigate or experiment with. I'll just give short descriptions here, but you can find a wealth of information on any of these topics with some googling.

You may not need any of this at all and just need to hit your dang MIT's. I wouldn't mess with any of this stuff unless it has become clear that you need it. If reading this list fills you with anxiety and overwhelm, then you shouldn't be doing this stuff yet.

If you read this stuff and are like, "Oh my gosh, this is exactly what I need," then you probably should think about incorporating it. Here's where that famous quote, "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler" fits nicely.

Calendar
If you have lots of appointments, irregular chunks of time, or things to remember on certain dates then using a calendar is basically mandatory. It's very difficult to be intentional with your time if you don't know how much of it you have available.

Time Blocking
Time blocking is a technique where you schedule out chunks of time to focus on specific tasks. It's kind of like making an appointment with yourself. Works well with a calendar.

Time tracking / Pomodoro Technique
I was nearly unable to be productive until I started tracking my time spent on MIT's. Coming out of porn addiction, the pomodoro technique (of working in 25 minute chunks) was invaluable to me because porn had destroyed my ability to maintain longer amounts of focus.

I now can (and prefer) to work much longer chunks of time before I take a break, but I recommend starting with this technique if you have trouble spending time on task.

Project Planning
I often have multiple complex projects going at once that are too much to keep track of in my simple weekly and daily plans. To solve this issue, I store my projects in a separate place where I break the action steps down into tiny manageable pieces and organize them along with any other relevant information to the project.

I do this in Dynalist because it's the best outlining tool I've found, but if your projects are simple enough you can just do them on another sheet of paper or note document.

With this setup, I can just reference how much time I want to work on the project in my daily or weekly plan. When it's time to get to work, I just open my project outline and take the steps I've outlined (if I haven't outlined what needs to get done, that's usually first).

The trick with projects is to do your best at limiting your work in progress. If you try to put too many meals in the oven at once, you're going to burn something.

Annual & Quarterly Planning
Once you are able to consistently make and follow through with weekly and daily plans, you might want to consider expanding your scope. I have an annual plan which contains the 5-10 big goals I want to accomplish for the year, and then a quarterly plan where I plot the big pieces I want to hit for each quarter.

Some people would view this higher level planning as essential, but it can be overwhelming for some people and is ultimately pointless unless you can live intentionally on the small scale first.

Routines
I use routines to neatly wrap up a bunch of tasks together. I have a morning routine, an evening routine, a workday startup routine, a workday shut-down routine, and multiple recurring work routines. For most people a morning and evening routine are enough and can be quite the game changer.

For daily routines I recommend implementing them one at a time, tracking it as a habit in your week plan, and only working another once you've internalized the first one. For weekly routines, I'd just add it to your week plan as a task. If you've got a ton of weekly routines, you can even add a separate part to your week plan to separate your routine tasks from your MIT's and unique one-off general tasks.

Templates
I use pre-made templates created using text-expander software so that I can quickly create the

structure of my plans or checklists for routine tasks. It’s a bit of an investment up front, but becomes a big time saver over the long haul.

Extra Information
I add a bit more information to my daily and weekly plans than what I showed here. So for example, on my daily plans I like to create separate sections for appointments (where I write down the appointment name and time) and notes (where I put anything I learned or observed so that I can see it when I review). I just like having everything on one sheet that can serve as my control system for the day. Feel free to change the structure and content of the plans to best suit your needs.

Reviews
Reviewing is sort of already built into this system since when you make a new week plan you'll have to look over your previous entries to see what it needs to move forward. But it can be useful to take a little time to reflect on the day/week/quarter to celebrate your wins and to see what you can learn from and improve. Here’s my weekly review checklist:

- Go back through this week's entries and review what you accomplished.
- List your top accomplishments for the week.
- How did you progress on your weekly MIT's?
- What are some lessons that you learned and how will you change your behavior moving forward?

Productivity Summary

To summarize, we are using productivity practices to help you cultivate authentic and meaningful status in life so you no longer need to rely upon the virtual status that porn offers.

The recommended order of priorities is to focus on self-management (self-talk, journaling, planning), energy-management (rest, exercise, nutrition), and core responsibilities (school, work, family). Once you are doing alright in these areas, you will want to expand your focus to higher level goals that allow you to build the kind of status or lifestyle that will allow you to live a life you don't want to escape.

To keep yourself focused, you will use a weekly and daily planning practice where you track your core habit changes, prioritize your tasks, and identify any critical points that will make or break your success.

Putting it all together

Goal: Follow the checklist to put your Reboot Regimen Together

So now that we've gone through the different pieces, you need to make decisions about what exactly your reboot regimen looks like. Here's a checklist you can use to help you put it all together:

- Decide where you are going to do your self-talk journaling (Notebook? Digital?)
- Decide when you are going to do your self-talk journaling (morning, evening etc.)
- Pick which energy management disciplines you are going to enact (I wouldn't do more than 3) and be specific about their implementation (if you are going to walk, when are you going to walk? Etc.)
- Decide where you are going to record you weekly and daily plans (Notebook? Digital?)
- Decide when you are going to generally do your planning (every morning, night before etc.)
- Create your first week plan
- Create your first day plan

You aren't going to be perfect. That's okay. This just gives you something to talk about and grow from in your self-talk ritual!

Beyond the Regimens

You can think of the regimens that I've introduced you to in the guide so far like the support beams of a house. They are essential structural components of building a porn-free life and are what you should probably focus on establishing first. However, a house needs more than just support beams and your porn-free life requires more than just these regimens.

In this final section I'm just going to cover some other avenues you may wish to pursue to take your reboot process deeper and further. For some of you, these other avenues may prove to be vital to your success.

Connection

I've heard it said that the opposite of addiction is connection. I don't quite agree with that, I believe the opposite of addiction, if indeed you can even claim an opposite of it, is truth. Regardless, I agree with the sentiment of how important connection is.

Porn use is a very isolating experience. It's something that is overwhelmingly done in secrecy and causes someone to withdraw from greater communion and intimacy with others.

Building meaningful connections with others can be crucial to constructing a life where porn has no place. Getting out to socialize with friends or spending time with family can make a major difference.

However, there's a special kind of connection that can be particularly useful during the rebooting phase. This is the connection with like-minded peers who are also going through a similar process.

I know that for me personally, connecting with others through the online porn recovery forums played a key role in my ability to leave porn behind. There are many of these kinds of online communities and joining one could be of great benefit to you on your journey.

To facilitate this kind of connection, I've started the Vanguard community. This is a community for men who are looking to flip the script on their escapist habits and live on the front lines of their life so that they can become men that they admire. Not surprisingly then, a big focus within this community is on quitting porn.

This community gives you weekly access to calls with me along with a private chat forum for everyone to share support, inspiration, and accountability. If this sounds like something you'd be interested I highly recommend you check it out here.

Inner Work

Sometimes the split between the "porn brain" and the "real you" runs very deep. Many guys today have huge disconnects between their higher ideals and their primal sexual impulses.

Repairing this split is no easy task and requires you to do some significant inner work. Not only can this include examining and upgrading your beliefs and values but can also require you learn how to interact and work with yourself in new and more effective ways.

I've mentioned previously that self-talk is the heart of your self-management. Well, your self-talk is only going to be as effective as your ability to understand yourself in the first place and know what to say in response. This is where learning plays an important role in your inner work. There are hundreds of self-help books out there and educating yourself on better modes of operation can be a real game changer.

This is the kind of stuff that I've looked at extensively in my other work. Understanding topics such as sexual transmutation, masculinity, sexual dynamics, mindset, belief systems, overcoming rationalizations and similar topics can supercharge the effectiveness of your self-talk.

I highly recommend you can check out my YouTube channel, my NoFap Academy porn recovery course, and simply subscribe to my mailing list. I'm always releasing updated content and currently have some pretty big stuff brewing.

Professional Support

Sometimes the very best thing that you can do is to get yourself some professional support. If you don't want to slog an indefinite period of research combined with trial and error, then getting the help of a trained professional can do a ton for your success.

The trick with rebooting is to find someone who understands the problem and is willing to truly HELP you with it. The crazy thing is that many sex therapists think that porn is great for you. They believe the problem isn't your porn use, it's just that you are filled with SHAME about your porn use.

So, your typical sex therapist will simply try to convince you to keep using porn and just drop the shame around it. I think a big reason for this is because many sex therapists simply got out of school before much of the scientific literature proving the issues of porn use was developed (If you're shaky on the science yourself you could probably get a lot from checking out yourbrainonporn.com).

Now, there definitely are some good therapists out there though if you are willing to look for them but you just need to make sure that you watch out for someone who is just going to try and get you to normalize something that truly is not serving you well.

An alternative to therapy is coaching. This is what I offer. Coaching is more proactive and directive than therapy and often requires a bigger investment. If you are truly ready to change as rapidly and effectively as possible, then coaching is probably the right move. If you are still back and forth about seriously quitting porn but are very troubled by it, then therapy might be a better fit.

If you want to find out more about my coaching, then check out my coaching page and hit me up!

Closing Thoughts

I hope you found this guide insightful and useful. You can absolutely quit porn and live as a man you admire. The heart of this process is choosing to value yourself enough to show up and work for your own benefit. You are worth this effort and worthy of the reward. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback, feel free to email me at contact@universalman.com.

Stay sharp,

Mark Queppet